

Community Sustainability Impact Assessment Tools

Council provided policy direction through the Community Sustainability Committee to develop community sustainability impact assessment tools to assess city initiatives, programs and policies.

The purpose of these tools is to provide:

1. Information on what those principles are and how to operationalize them (definitions, populations to consider, impacts – adverse and beneficial);
2. Key questions to aid and guide assessments; and
3. Consistency across the city regarding how terms are defined and how assessments are conducted.

Use of Impact and Benefit Assessment Tools: Council wishes to assess sustainability impacts of all city processes and policies, including:

- City Council Agenda Items
- Council Weekly Information Items
- Business Plan
- Council Initiatives
- Boulder Valley Comp Plan (BVCP)
- Master Plans and Strategic Plans
- Capital Projects

These tools will be piloted with staff generated items and internal processes. Understanding the city is already highly regulated and processes are complex, the desire is to provide a framework that is not overly cumbersome, but provides meaningful information for Council, staff and the community. **These principles and key questions should be considered early in any process.** Responses to the eight key questions in each of the areas (social, environmental and economic) should be included in Council documents.

Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan Community Sustainability Policy

The city and county adopt the sustainability principles in policies to interpret and guide the implementation of the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. The city and county recognize:

- a) the critical interrelationships among economic, social and environmental health;
- b) the way we produce, trade and consume impacts our ability to sustain natural resources;
- c) social and cultural equity and diversity creates valuable human capital that contributes to the economy and environmental sustainability;
- d) planned physical development has an impact on social conditions and should be considered in community planning; and
- e) the quality of environmental, economic and social health is built upon the full engagement and involvement of the community.



The city and county seek to maintain and enhance the livability, health and vitality of the

Boulder Valley and the natural systems of which it is a part, now and in the long-term future.

The city and county seek to preserve choices for future generations and to anticipate and adapt to changing community needs and external influences.

See BVCP for policies 1.02 -1.05 Principles of Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability and Community Engagement.

Social Sustainability Impact / Benefit Assessment Worksheet

Statement of Activity or Policy:

Main Rationale or Benefit of Activity or Policy:

Who and What: This matrix is for your use (not to be included in submitted documents) to help you consider and identify populations and types of impacts in order to address the eight key questions below. *Indicate all that could potentially apply, using a "+" to indicate benefit and a "-" to indicate adverse impact.* This chart assesses who to be attentive to in particular and what potential types of impacts to consider.

WHAT

WHO

	Health, safety, basic needs	Income	Housing	Employment	Displacement	Access to Services	Inconvenience	Transportation	Outreach	Other?
Seniors										
People with Disabilities										
People of Diverse Backgrounds, including Latino and other immigrants										
Workforce										
Low and Moderate Income										
Middle Income										
Children										
Youth										
Schools										
Neighborhoods										
Single Parent Households										
Other:										

Eight Key Social Impact/Benefit Questions

Social Impacts—Impacts and Benefits:

1. How will people benefit or be impacted?
2. Who/what will potentially benefit?
3. Who/what will be potentially adversely impacted?

Degree of Benefit/Impacts:

4. How many people potentially affected?
(Quantify if possible or provide a general sense of number, e.g., few, some many)
5. What will be the degree of impact or benefit?
(Quantify or provide a general sense of magnitude, e.g., minimal, moderate, substantial and historical trends)

Assessment Process:

6. What information was used to analyze impacts/benefits? (e.g., public meetings, surveys, census or other data, research, interviews)

Mitigation/Outreach/Engagement:

7. Describe efforts to communicate with and solicit input from the public, particularly those who may be impacted and those not always involved in public processes.
8. Describe efforts to mitigate negative impacts.

Social Sustainability Principles (from BVCP Policies 1.04 Social Sust. and 1.05 Comm. Engagement)

- Recognize, respect and value cultural and social diversity.
- Recognize social and cultural inequities create environmental and economic instability.
- Ensure the basic health and safety needs of all residents are met.
- Provide infrastructure that encourages culturally and socially diverse communities to prosper and connect to the larger community.
- Engage/involve the broad public, including those not always involved in public process and those who may be under-represented, under-participating, or under-served.

Sustainability Terms:

Engagement: The involvement of all sectors of the community in civic life and creating opportunities for those who are not typically represented to participate in civic life.

Social Sustainability: Supporting equity and diversity; meeting the basic needs of residents (food, shelter, safety, basic medical care); investment in human resources and capital (investment in employee training and development; skills, education, and experience of residents and employees).

Social Equity and Diversity: Participatory governance; deliberate; inclusionary processes; creating opportunity for all; considering and including the needs of all community members, including those who are low income or marginalized.

Human/Social Capital: People skills and abilities (education, training, knowledge); culture; health and well-being (physical and mental). Cohesiveness of community; common norms; resources of social institutions.

Populations to Consider Terms:

Seniors: People over the age of 60. Seniors may range widely in age, ability, needs, activity level, and preferences.

People with Disabilities: People with physical, emotional, cognitive and/or mental disabilities.

People of Diverse Backgrounds, including Latino and other immigrants: People of diverse ethnicities and cultures.

Workforce: People who are employed for pay, in a wide variety of jobs and fields, including, but not limited to workers in: service and retail, manufacturing, research, teaching, professionals, administration, etc.

Low and Moderate Income: Generally, those whose income is at or below the median income for the community, i.e., ranging from the federal poverty level (<\$18,000 for a family of 4) to very low income (<\$40,000 for a family of 3) to moderate income (<60,000 for a family of 3).

Middle Income: Those whose income is at or slightly above the median income, i.e., (about \$78,000 for a family of 3).

Children: Those 12 years and under.

Youth: Those ages 13 to 18.

Schools: Public or private educational institutions.

Neighborhoods: An area of the community generally defined by location.

Potential Impacts/Benefits Terms:

Health, safety, basic needs: Essentials necessary for survival, such as food, housing, health care, etc.

Housing: Shelter, lodging or accommodation provided in apartments, houses, or facilities.

Employment: Work, occupation, trade, business, profession, etc.

Displacement: Being put out of a usual place, such as a residence or neighborhood.

Access to Services: The way or means by which people are able to secure needed services and activities, such as transportation, shopping, health care, etc.

Inconvenience: Being difficult or complicated to access or use.

Transportation: The means of moving being between different locations, such as walking, biking, bus, train, driving.

Outreach: Making special or particular efforts to contact, involve or accommodate those who cannot, will not, or are not likely to use facilities, services or processes.

Environmental Sustainability Impact / Benefit Assessment Worksheet

Statement of Activity or Policy: _____

Main Rationale or Benefit of Activity or Policy: _____

What: This environmental assessment is a systematic process designed to identify, analyze, and evaluate the environmental effects of an activity. The aim of the process is to identify any foreseeable adverse impacts, and allows effective integration of environmental considerations and public concerns into decision-making. The following lists will help you consider and identify issues in order to address the eight key questions below.

Areas of Potential Benefit / Impact	Stakeholders, Groups, Resources	Opportunities
<p>Have you considered potential impacts to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Areas or Features • Riparian Areas / Floodplains • Wetlands • Geology & Soils • Water Quality • Air Quality, both indoor and outdoor • Resource Conservation – resource use, energy, waste • Cultural & Historic Resources • Visual Quality • Services (water, sewer, recycling, waste removal) • Local business and industry • Environmental organizations • Local neighborhoods • Special populations (including low income, under-served, non-English speaking, etc.) • Other City Departments and programs <p>See also the Project Planning and Approval Process (PPAP) for the CEAP checklist and the 'General Conditions for Construction Projects' for additional information on the permitting process.</p>	<p>Staff Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Environmental Affairs (OEA) • water quality, water conservation • natural resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSMP • Parks & Recreation • Planning • Forestry • Go Boulder • Board resources <p>Have you reviewed your proposal/project with any of the following local organizations, if applicable? (For names of specific organizations, please contact OEA.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental advocacy groups • Professional organizations • Non-profit organizations • Recreation advocacy groups • NGO's • Chamber of Commerce environmental sub-committee • Environmental Justice groups • Wildlife advocacy groups • Neighborhood groups <p>Are there any other outside experts who may be able to review your project for its environmental impacts/benefits?</p>	<p>How does the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate cutting edge, innovative or creative approaches? • Strive to meet the goals of the Climate Action Plan? • Affect the Waste Reduction Master Plan? • Strive to meet the "Zero-Waste" resolution? • Affect departmental master plans? • Meet or exceed local, state and federal regulations? • What environmental best management practices (BMP's) have been researched or considered? Have other communities been contacted? • Strive to meet the city's green building goals? • What are the trade-offs among city policies and goals in the proposed project? (e.g. higher financial investment to gain better long-term services or fewer environmental impacts)
<p>The Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) states that the city and county will seek to maintain and enhance the livability, health and vitality of the Boulder Valley and the natural systems of which it is a part, now and in the long-term future. Please reference the back of this page for a complete listing of the BVCP Environmental Sustainability Principles.</p>		

Eight Key Environmental Impacts / Benefit Questions

Environmental Impacts & Benefits:

1. What environmental resources will potentially benefit from this activity or policy?
2. Which resources will be adversely impacted?
3. Where are the resources located?
4. Has a cost/benefit analysis been done for this project?

Degree of Benefit / Impact:

5. What is the degree of impact or benefit? (Quantify or provide a general sense of magnitude, e.g., minimal, moderate, substantial)

Assessment of Process:

6. What information was used to analyze impacts / benefits? (e.g. public meetings/interest groups, technical assessments, experts, internal and external sources)

Mitigation / Opportunities:

7. Describe efforts to incorporate resource conservation and measures for environmental health into the project. Are there options you can identify that will pose possible mitigation efforts against project trade-offs?
8. Describe efforts to mitigate negative impacts.

Principles of Environmental Sustainability (from BVCP Policy 1.02 Environmental Sustainability)

There are limits to the capacity of the biosphere to support the life of human beings at current levels of consumption and pollution. There are limits to the land and soil available for food production, to available water, to resources such as trees, fish and wildlife, to industrial resources like oil and metals, and to the ability of nature to absorb our waste.

With this in mind, the city and county acknowledge the importance of natural capital, which can be kept at healthy levels for the long term only when we are able to do the following:

- a) Renewable resources should not be used faster than they are recharged or replenished by the environment.
- b) Non-renewable resources should be used with the greatest care and efficiency, and some of those should be used to develop renewable replacements.
- c) Waste should not be dumped into nature any faster than nature can absorb it.

Where to find more information on Policies and Programs

Climate Action Plan

In May 2002, the Boulder City Council passed Resolution 906, also known as the Kyoto Resolution, setting the goal of reducing community greenhouse gas emissions to seven percent below 1990 levels by 2012. The resolution stems from concerns about the potential negative impacts of climate change on the Rocky Mountain region and beyond and builds on environmental policies and goals adopted in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan and the City Council's Environmental Goal.

As a result of this resolution, staff in the Office of Environmental Affairs was directed to develop an action plan to serve as a roadmap to Boulder's Kyoto goal. The overarching vision of the Plan is to develop a sustainable energy future for Boulder and Boulder County. Passed in June, 2006, the Climate Action Plan provides a framework to compare and analyze alternative strategies and policies, in order to facilitate Council's review and the decision-making process. The Plan includes baseline data and emissions reduction strategies for all sectors—commercial, industrial, residential, transportation, and solid waste. It also addresses city operations, water conservation and urban forestry. View the plan at:

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7698&Itemid=2844

Waste Reduction Master Plan

Adopted in Feb. 2006, the Master Plan for Waste Reduction creates a framework for making strategic decisions about waste reduction programs and funding.

http://www.bouldercolorado.gov/files/Environmental%20Affairs/Waste%20Reduction/mpwr-february_2006-web_version.pdf

"Zero-Waste" resolution

The city encourages the pursuit of Zero Waste as a long-term goal in order to eliminate waste and pollution in the manufacture, use, storage, and recycling of materials.

Green Building Goals

The Green Points Building Program encourages the use of cost-effective and sustainable remodeling and building methods and technologies that conserve energy, water and other natural resources. This code was adopted in 1996, and revised in 2001. Currently the code is under revision and revised information will be provided in the near future.

Economic Sustainability Impact / Benefit Assessment Worksheet

Statement of Activity or Policy: _____
Main Rationale or Benefit of Activity or Policy: _____

Economic Impact / Benefit Matrix

What Impacted or Benefiting

Use a +, -, 0 (no Impact) system	Revenue Growth	Development Costs including	Overhead Expenses	Access	Customer Impacts	Competition / Risk of Relocation	Parking	Employee Impacts	Procedures & Permitting
Business size (e.g. small businesses)									
Business (retail)									
Industrial									
Service									
Non-Profits									
University									
Federal Labs									
Other Gov't Agencies									
University Hill									
Downtown									
North Boulder									
28 th & 29 th Street									
Transit Village									
East Boulder									

Who
Impacted or
Benefiting

Eight Key Economic Impact / Benefit Questions

Economic Impacts and Benefits:

1. How will businesses benefit or be impacted?
2. Who/what will potential benefit?
3. Who/what will potentially be adversely impacted?

Degree of Benefit / Impact

4. How many people / businesses potentially affected? (Quantify if possible or provide a general sense of number, e.g., few, some many)
5. What will be the degree of impact or benefit? (Quantify or provide a general sense of magnitude, e.g., minimal, moderate, substantial and historical trends)

Assessment Process:

6. What information was used to analyze impacts/benefits? (e.g., public meetings, surveys, census or other data, research, interviews)

Mitigation / Outreach / Engagement:

7. Describe efforts to communicate with and solicit input from the public, particularly those who may be impacted and those not always involved in public processes. Specifically describe outreach to the following groups:
 - a. Chamber of commerce
 - b. DMC/DBI/BID
 - c. 29th Street
 - d. University Hill alliance / HUGID
 - e. Responsible Hospitality Group
 - f. Boulder Tomorrow
 - g. PLAN Boulder
 - h. Developers
 - i. Retail Association
 - j. Core Group
 - k. Non-Profits
 - l. Minority Own
8. Describe efforts to mitigate negative impacts.

Economic Sustainability Principles

- A diverse economic base and tax system;
- Recognize, respect and value entrepreneurship;
- Recognize that all size businesses make valuable contributions to the economic vitality of Boulder;
- Provide and promote physical infrastructure including housing that encourages competitive and quality businesses;
- Healthy and safe work environments;
- Retention and attraction of valuable businesses and employees;
- Promote diverse retail that appeals to all economic levels;
- Maximize the economic relationship with the university and federal labs.

Populations to Consider – Terms:

- **Business Size**
 - **Businesses with less than 10 employees** – Sole proprietors, small businesses, home businesses. Often have small margins, limited benefits, may not use professional services like accountants, marketers, attorneys. Less aware of government regulations.
 - **Businesses with 10-50 employees** – Small businesses, growing businesses, local franchises. May have high turnover, high competition, decisions made elsewhere. Probably lease.
 - **Businesses with 50-200 employees** – Significant impact on the local economy. Usually provide benefits.
 - **Businesses with 200+ employees** – Big impact on the local economy. Provide benefits. May own building.
- **Business (Retail)** – establishments engaged in selling merchandise for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of the goods. Excludes eating and drinking establishments.
- **Restaurants** – Retail establishments selling prepared foods and drinks for consumption on the premises; and also lunch counters and refreshment stands selling prepared foods and drinks for immediate consumption.
- **Industrial** – Includes manufacturing, production, warehousing, and industrial office uses.
- **Service** – includes establishments primarily engaged in providing a wide variety of services for individuals, business and government establishments, and other organizations. Hotels and other lodging places; establishments providing personal, business, repair and amusement services; health, legal, engineering, and other professional services; educational institutions; membership organizations, and other miscellaneous services are included.
- **Non-Profits** – Incorporated as such. Always trying to limit overhead costs. Revenue challenges. Office space challenges.
- **University** – The University of Colorado at Boulder including its related facilities around town.
- **Federal Labs** – Institutions owned by the Federal Government and operating inside the city of Boulder. NIST, NOAA.
- **Other Government Agencies** – Boulder County, Boulder Valley School District, post Office, State Agencies, Special Districts (e.g. Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District).
- **University Hill** – geographic area and other property owners within 1 mile of the commercial district.
- **Downtown** – the geographic area contained in the Business Improvement District plus the city campus.
- **North Boulder** – The geographic retail north of Iris on Broadway.
- **Transit Village** - The geographic area surrounding the future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station and commuter rail station near Pearl and 30th.
- **East Boulder** – The commercial sector located east of 30th Street along Baseline, Arapahoe, and Pearl

Potential Impacts/Benefits Terms:

- **Revenue Growth** – the ability to increase revenues over a sustained period of time.
- **Development Costs Including Infrastructure** – The required costs including land acquisition, street and utility development, construction or renovation of the space, proximity to high speed and large volume data connections; permit costs, impact fees and excise taxes.
- **Overhead Expenses** – Fixed or variable costs associated with providing the business. Includes compensation, benefits, ongoing utilities, government regulations, machines and equipment.
- **Access** – How easily or difficult can the customer access the business.
- **Customer Impacts** – The convenience or inconvenience to the customer such that it will increase or deter patronage to the business. Provides a particular service to the community that is not widely found locally.
- **Competition/Risk of Relocation** - Businesses that offer similar service or goods. The portability of that business. The saturation or uniqueness of that business. The economies of scale associated with the business type. The quantity and quality of jobs.
- **Parking** – Consistency with land use requirements. Efforts related to demand management. Availability and best and highest use of land. Customer versus employee impacts.
- **Employee Impacts** – Wages, benefits, transportation, commute time, career opportunities, tenure, job growth or contraction. Access to services (e.g. food, gas, car care, retail).
- **Procedures & Permitting** - Cost of permits, impact fees and excise taxes. Time associated with acquiring the appropriate permits and the associated impacts for both business and community.

